

Message Text

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PAGE 01 STATE 071451 TOSEC 030160
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NO. 13 FOR CARTER FROM PA

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SUBJECT: PRESS MATERIAL

1. HERewith FULL TEXT EVANS AND NOVAK OP-ED COLUMN
WASHINGTON POST THURSDAY MARCH 31 HEADED "CARTER'S DILEMMA
WITH 'EUROCOMMUNISTS.'"

2. THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION'S UNCERTAINTY ABOUT WHAT TO
DO ABOUT EVER MORE POWERFUL COMMUNIST PARTIES IN WESTERN
EUROPE RESULTED IN A LAST-MINUTE SIGNALS SWITCH IN THE
WHITE HOUSE TWO WEEKS AGO. IT BLOCKED A PRESIDENTIAL
STATEMENT THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN INTERPRETED AS BREAKING
PREVIOUS HARD-LINE HOSTILITY TO THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY.

3. ELEVENTH-HOUR INTERVENTION BY ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI,
PRESIDENT CARTER'S NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR, BLOCKED
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PAGE 02 STATE 071451 TOSEC 030160

ISSUANCE OF THE STATE DEPARTMENT STATEMENT MARCH 18 AT THE
WHITE HOUSE SWEARING-IN OF RICHARD K. GARDNER AS AMBASSADOR
TO ITALY. THAT SAVED ITALY'S RULING CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS
FROM EMBARRASSMENT. BUT THERE HAS SINCE BEEN IRRITATION IN
ROME OVER WHAT THE GOVERNMENT THERE FEELS IS OVERLY
SOLICITOUS TREATMENT OF THE COMMUNISTS AND ITALIAN LEFT BY
AMBASSADOR GARDNER.

4. BOTH THE ABORTED PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT AND THE NEW AMBASSADOR'S CONDUCT REFLECT THE STRONG REACTION OF CARTER'S NON-CAREER DIPLOMATIC APPOINTMENTS TO THE FORD-KISSINGER HARD LINE AGAINST MISNAMED "EUROCOMMUNISM" ON GROUNDS THAT IT SMACKED OF INTERFERENCE WITH ITALIAN POLITICS. BUT STATE DEPARTMENT PROFESSIONALS DISBELIEVE CLAIMS OF INDEPENDENCE FROM MOSCOW BY THE "EUROCOMMUNISTS," WHO, IF THEY ACHIEVED POWER, WOULD DESTROY THE NATO ALLIANCE AND CHALLENGE U.S. INFLUENCE IN WESTERN EUROPE. THE RECENT EVENTS SHOW THE PRESIDENT HAS NOT YET MADE HIS CHOICE.

5. THE NEW CARTER APPOINTEES IN THE STATE DEPARTMENT, SEEKING TO SHOW THAT THE NEW PRESIDENT HAS NEW IDEAS ABOUT THE U.S. NOT INTERFERING WITH "EUROCOMMUNISM," PUSHED FOR SUCH A STATEMENT AT THE GARDNER SWEARING-IN. "THE NEW FELLOWS OVER THERE ARE ZEALOTS ON THE OLD BUGABOO OF U.S. INTERFERENCE IN FOREIGN POLITICS," ONE CAREER OFFICIAL TOLD US. "THEY CAN'T FORGET CHILE, AND SO THEY WANTED THE PRESIDENT ON RECORD."

6. OLD-LINE DIPLOMATS, INCLUDING TOP HANDS IN THE BUREAU OF EUROPEAN AFFAIRS, WANTED A DIFFERENT PRESIDENTIAL STATEMENT, SPELLING OUT THIS FUNDAMENTAL POINT: THE CARTER POLICY WOULD NOT DIFFER FROM PRESIDENT FORD'S IN BASIC OPPOSITION TO "EUROCOMMUNISM" (EVEN THOUGH IT IS FAR MORE LIBERAL IN HANDING OUT VISAS TO EUROPEAN COMMUNISTS).

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PAGE 03 STATE 071451 TOSEC 030160

7. THE RESULTING PRESIDENTIAL DRAFT WAS AN AMALGAM FOR BOTH POINTS OF VIEW, COMBINING THESE CONTRASTING THEMES:

8. FIRST (SATISFYING THE OLD-TIMERS), THAT THE U.S. PREFERS DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED GOVERNMENTS THAT GOVERN DEMOCRATICALLY WITHOUT FOREIGN IDEOLOGICAL ALLIANCES (MEANING MOSCOW) AND THAT THE U.S. IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY'S UPHOLDING DEMOCRATIC VALUES AS PROMISED.

9. SECOND (SATISFYING THE CARTER NEWCOMERS), THAT THE U.S. WILL NEVER AGAIN INTRUDE IN ITALY'S INTERNAL POLITICAL AFFAIRS (AS IN PAST CIA CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS). MAKING THE USUAL OBEISANCE TO CARTER'S HUMAN RIGHTS THEME, THE DECLARATION PROMISED CONTINUING U.S. EFFORTS TO DEVELOP CLOSER FRIENDSHIP WITH ITALY.

10. WHEN WORD OF THIS LEAKED IN ROME, PRIME MINISTER GIULIO ANDREOTTI'S EMBATTLED CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATIC

GOVERNMENT WAS DISTRESSED. THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT FELT THAT ANY STATEMENT THAT DOES NOT PUT THE U.S. SQUARELY AGAINST THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY WOULD IMMEDIATELY BE INTERPRETED BY ITALIAN VOTERS AS A SWITCH AWAY FROM HENRY KISSINGER'S HARD LINE, RAISING COMMUNIST PRESTIGE.

11. AT THE LAST MINUTE, BRZEZINSKI ORDERED THE STATEMENT HELD UP. AGREEING WITH HIM WAS SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE, AT THAT TIME PREOCCUPIED BY PRE-MOSCOW ARRANGEMENTS.

12. THAT RELIEVED THE ITALIAN GOVERNMENT--BUT ONLY MOMENTARILY. IT SOON FOUND FURTHER CAUSE FOR CONCERN WHEN GARDNER, A WELL-KNOWN LIBERAL DEMOCRAT WHO HAS BEEN PROFESSOR OF INTERNATIONAL LAW AT COLUMBIA, ARRIVED IN ROME.

13. WITHIN HOURS OF PRESENTING HIS CREDENTIALS TO
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PAGE 04 STATE 071451 TOSEC 030160

PRESIDENT GIOVANNI LEONE, GARDNER PAID A CALL ON PIETRO INGRAO, A LEADING MEMBER OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY PRESIDUM WHO IS PRESIDENT OF THE CHAMBER OF DEPUTIES. PROTOCOL REQUIRED GARDNER TO CALL ON INGRAO, BUT CHRISTIAN DEMOCRAT POLITICIANS WERE UPSET THAT HE DID SO WITH SUCH SPEED. THE GOVERNMENT WAS ALSO AGGRIEVED BY GARDNER'S INTERVIEW OVER THE SOCIALIST LEFT'S ITALIAN TELEVISION STATIONS BEFORE HE WENT ON THE GOVERNMENT NETWORK.

14. NUANCES OF PRESIDENTIAL PROSE AND AMBASSADORIAL CONDUCT ARE EXAGGERATED BY THE HAND-TO-HAND PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE OVER RAPIDLY ADVANCING "EUROCOMMUNISM" IN ITALY'S POLITICAL TRENCHES. EVERY SYLLABLE UTTERED AND EVERY ACTION TAKEN BY THE U.S. IS NOW ENDOWED WITH POLITICAL SIGNIFICANCE, AND WHAT THE U.S. HAS DONE SO FAR--DESPITE THE WITHDRAWAL OF THE CARTER POLICY STATEMENT--IS EXTREMELY UNSETTLING TO THE ANTI-COMMUNIST PARTIES OF ITALY.

15. THE POLICY STATEMENT MAY YET BE ISSUED IN A LESS CONSPICUOUS PLACE THAN THE OVAL OFFICE OF THE WHITE HOUSE. INDEED, DISAGREEMENT OVER WHETHER OR NOT TO ISSUE IT IS A MEASURE OF THE NEW ADMINISTRATION'S UNCERTAINTY. KISSINGER BLASTED "EUROCOMMUNISM" AS AN UNMITIGATED EVIL FOR THE WEST; THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION CANNOT DECIDE WHETHER TO STATE ITS OPPOSITION IN SUCH BLUNT LANGUAGE.
CHRISTOPHER

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